

CHAPTER XI: Overview of NCCAM

Use of CAM in the US Population

Our estimate of the amount people are spending on this based on the National Health Interview Survey is \$34 billion. That's a very large amount of money. It is, however, only 1% of the country's healthcare expenditures, but about 10% of the amount that's actually paid out of pocket, and that's 2007. As there are more uninsured, the portion may change somewhat, because there are more out-of-pocket costs. Ok so these are the actual use of selective care modalities in 2007. Natural products, defined for the purpose of this survey as non-vitamin, non-mineral dietary supplements, are used by about 17% of the country or 38 million. The survey estimates of dietary supplements have some problems, because people may not have a clear and consistent definition of what is a dietary supplement and they may choose not to reveal what they are taking, but industry sources are pretty much consistent with this, so the Nutrition Business Journal, which is the trade journal for dietary supplements and over-the-counter medications. They're estimate is that 20% of the population are users of botanical or herbal supplements. So there are some differences between the industry data and the survey data, but at least in a broad qualitative sense that they're reasonably consistent.

The next class of non-mainstream practice that is identified by respondents in survey is deep breathing and meditation. These practices are widely used, and chiropractic and massage are the next category. This compares the data in 2002 and 2007. And increased use of meditation massage and yoga, these are actually for NHIS very big changes. Most of the findings they find only small year-to-year changes. So our colleagues at the CDC who did this analysis were surprised at the magnitude of these changes. I think they're not all that surprising is these are practices that as you walk down the street you see more places advertising yoga and so-on, but I think they are showing an interest to the public in the mind/body kind of complementary and alternative medicine.